(c) and (d) The average increase in the producer prices remained lower or has been negative in the major developed countries. A statement showing the movement of average producer prices, which are closer to wholesale prices, in major developed countries and in India for April—December, 2002 is given in the Statement.

Statement

Movement of Producer Prices (Average) in selected Developed Countries and in India during April-December 2002

Countries	Apr. 02	May, 02	Jun. 02	Jul. 02	Aug. 02	Sep. 02	Oct. 02	Nov. 02	Dec. 02	Average (Apr-Dec.02)
Belgium	1.4	2.4	2.4	—0.2	0.8	0.8	1.5	1.5	1.4	**1.3**
Britain	0.2	0.1	0	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.6	1.2	1.2	**0.5**
Canada	—1.5	—2.6	—1.2	—0.3	0.4	0.5	2.4	2.2	2.8	**0.3**
France	—0.7	—1.5	—1.5	NA	—0.2	0.3	0.6	0.9	1.7	**—0.1**
Germany	—0.5	—1.3	—1.5	—0.8	—0.5	0.3	0.9	1 1	1.1	**—0.1**
Italy	—1.2	—0.9	—0.8	0.1	0.2	0.5	1.1	1.2	1.5	**0.2**
Japan	—0.7	—0.9	—1	—2.2	—1.3	—0.4	—0.3	—0.3	NA	**—0.9**
Netherlands	—0.7	0	—2.2	—0.4	0.2	0.6	2.2	2.1	4.0	**0.6**
Spain	0.8	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.8	1.1	1.6	1.7	2.0	**1.1**
USA	—2	—2.7	—2.1	—1.1	—1.6	—1.9	0.6	0.9	1.2	**—1.0**
Euro Area	—0.7	—0.9	—1.1	0.6	—0.2	0.1	0.9	1.1	1.5	**0.1**
India*	1.5	1.6	2.4	2.8	3.3	3.5	3.1	3.4	3.2	2.8

Source: The Economist, various issues
*Wholesale Price Index

Malpractices in PDS

959. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether lack of supervision affects PDS badly; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed for vigilance mechanism against continued malpractices by the dealers of fair price shops?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA): (a) and (b) The Public Distribution System (Control) Order 2001 provides for stringent punishment under Section 7 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 against fair price shop owners for malpractices. The Order provides the procedure for monitoring of the Public Distribution System including the functioning of the Fair Price Shops by the State Governments as under:

(i) State Governments shall ensure a proper system of monitoring of fair price shops and prescribe model sale register, stock register and ration card register.

(ii) State Governments shall ensure regular inspections of fair price shops not less than once in six months by the designated authority. State Governments may issue orders specifying the inspection schedule, list of check points and the authority responsible for ensuring compliance with the said orders.

(iii) Meetings of the Vigilance Committees on the Public Distribution System at the State, District, Block and FPS level shall be held on a regular basis. The date and periodicity shall be notified by the State Government. However, the periodicity shall not be less than one meeting a quarter at all levels.

Foodgrains to poorest families

960. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMACHANDRAYYA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry is working on a scheme wherein an additional one crore of the poorest families would be provided food at nominal prices;

(b) if so, whether he had discussions with the Prime Minister beforehand to take his consent on this;